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## **Editorial: Reasons for the cull**

A report released last year outlined an epidemic of educators leaving the profession, which many in and out of teaching can provide anecdotal evidence to corroborate. According to its findings, nearly half of all teachers leave the profession within their first five years.

“Roughly half a million U.S. teachers either move or leave the profession each year — attrition that costs the United States up to \$2.2 billion annually, according to a new report from the Alliance for Excellent Education,” read a July 17, 2014 press release.

In today’s story on this subject, Tribune reporter Lauren Slagter cited a study that may help shed light on the reasons behind the cull. Within the National Center for Education Statistics’ 2012-13 Teacher Follow-up Survey is a fascinating table chronicling how aspects of former teachers’ current positions rate better, worse or the same as their classroom days. Of the 20 possible aspects, teaching only scored higher in two categories: benefits and job security. All of the 18 remaining characteristics weren’t even close. The top three features these former educators enjoyed about their new professions over teaching were: ability to balance life and work (60.8

percent), influence over workplace policies and practices (58.5 percent) and autonomy or control over own work (57.4 percent).

There is a pattern to be observed here. Teaching is a notoriously thankless, low-paying profession that can easily swallow one's entire life whole as a matter of course. This is not, or shouldn't be, a shock to anyone looking to enter the profession. What does come as a surprise to many newly minted instructors is the amount of interference and meddling that come from administrators, parents and, most importantly, the Legislature. We in Indiana should be familiar with the radical changes in education policy we have seen under both the Daniels and Pence administrations. What we must recognize is the detrimental impact this can have on those still learning their way in an already incredibly challenging field.

When teachers leave the profession shortly after heading into the workforce, it costs all of us dearly in a myriad of ways. Teachers need our support to do the one thing they desperately want to do: their jobs.